

Mandating this HDTV copy protection system from the Federal Government is a bad idea for the consumers the FCC is mandated to serve.

1. NO copy protection scheme is ever 100% secure for more than a VERY brief time. When this hardware-based protection is broken by criminals, will consumers be forced to buy ANOTHER piece of hardware with updated copy protection, or send their tuner in for a firmware update? This is not a practical idea.

2. Why should consumers have to bear the cost of copy protection which will ultimately be ineffective? What about all the people who already bought HDTV who will now have to spend MORE to get full broadcast quality on HDTV if this system is approved? Make the industry pushing for these ill-conceived provisions reimburse the working-class people for the cost of these hardware upgrades, because early adopters of HDTV systems will be obsoleted.

3. Analog broadcasts can still be recorded forever, and this hole will never be effectively plugged.

4. Consumer's right to record broadcasts has been firmly established in the Betamax case. This is a stealth attempt by the industry to regulate what can and cannot be recorded, and is unappreciated.

5. How will this affect the emerging market for TiVo and similar devices. If a program is marked as "unrecordable" or "untransferrable", it would directly affect the functionality of these emerging devices that are the future of television viewing.

6. The costs of a "fully secure" system (HDTV, Tuner, DVD, etc) will be so prohibitive that people simply will not buy, further slowing the HDTV rollout and mass-acceptance. Consumers want choice, flexibility, and convenience. This system takes that away under the guise of "protecting" the content providers. It is NOT in the best interests of anyone but the content providers and is actually anti-consumer, taking away rights that have been established for more than 25 years.

7. Stronger enforcement of existing anti-piracy laws will do far more than anything the broadcast flag can do in the real world. Unfortunately, that shifts the burden of cost to the content providers and law-enforcement, who are more vocal about budget constraints than a largely unaware consumer population. However, if this is enacted, that consumer population will vote with their wallets and stall HDTV acceptance progress...again.

The quickest way to kill any new technology is to make it cumbersome, inflexible, and expensive. The broadcast flag will serve no other purpose than to kill any chance at consumer adoption of HDTV.